

**Amendments to the Claims:**

Please cancel claims 1-15, 17, 20, 22-26, 34, 35, and 40 without prejudice to pursuing these claims in a continuation or other application. Please amend claims 16 and 27 as follows. Following is a complete listing of the claims pending in the application, as amended:

1-15. (Cancelled)

16. (Currently amended) An aircraft, comprising:

an aft-swept wing having a first portion on a first side of an aircraft centerline and a second portion on a second side of the centerline;

a fuselage portion coupled to the wing ~~portion~~, the fuselage portion being configured for sustained cruise flight at subsonic Mach numbers of at least 0.85, the fuselage portion including a cab portion, the cab portion including:

an external flow surface having a generally rounded nose portion with a forward extremity, the external flow surface further having a windshield aperture positioned only above and aft of the forward extremity of the rounded nose portion; and

a windshield disposed in the windshield aperture, wherein a contour of the external flow surface and the windshield extending from a position on the external flow surface beneath the windshield, aft over the windshield to a position on the external flow surface aft of and above the windshield has a generally continuously smooth, unkinked shape;

landing gear depending from at least one of the wing ~~portion~~ and the fuselage portion; and

a propulsion system having a plurality of turbofan engines providing the sole propulsive force for sustained cruise flight at subsonic Mach numbers of at least 0.85.

17. (Cancelled)

18. (Original) The aircraft of claim 16 wherein the fuselage portion has a waisted cross-sectional shape including a first region having a first cross-sectional area, a second region aft of the first region having a second cross-sectional area smaller than the first cross-sectional area, and a third region aft of the second region having a third cross-sectional area greater than the second cross-sectional area.

19. (Original) The aircraft of claim 16, further comprising a canard depending from the fuselage portion.

20. (Cancelled)

21. (Original) The aircraft of claim 16 wherein the fuselage portion houses a pressurized passenger cabin.

22.-26. (Cancelled)

27. (Currently amended) A method for manufacturing an aircraft system, comprising:

fabricating a fuselage having an external flow surface ~~with~~having a generally rounded nose portion, the nose portion having ~~with~~ a forward extremity and a windshield aperture positioned above and aft of the forward extremity of the rounded nose portion, the fuselage housing a passenger cabin, and being configured for sustained cruise flight at subsonic Mach numbers of at least 0.85; and

positioning a windshield in the windshield aperture, with a contour of the external flow surface and the windshield extending from a position on the external flow surface beneath the windshield, aft over the windshield to a position on the external flow surface aft of and above the windshield having a generally continuously smooth and unkinked shape;

coupling the fuselage to an aft-swept wing having a first portion on a first side of the fuselage portion and a second portion on a second side of the fuselage portion;

coupling landing gear to at least one of the wing and the fuselage; and  
coupling a propulsion system to at least one of the wing and the fuselage, the  
propulsion system including a plurality of turbofan engines providing the  
sole propulsive force for sustained cruise flight at subsonic Mach numbers  
of at least 0.85.

28. (Original) The method of claim 27 wherein positioning the windshield includes positioning the windshield so that the contour of the external flow surface and the windshield intersects a generally vertical plane passing through the external flow surface and the windshield.

29. (Original) The method of claim 27 wherein positioning the windshield includes positioning the windshield so that the contour of the external flow surface and the windshield intersects a generally vertical plane passing through the external flow surface and the windshield at a longitudinal centerline of the cab portion.

30. (Original) The method of claim 27 wherein the contour of the external flow surface and the windshield is a first contour and wherein positioning the windshield includes positioning the windshield so that the first contour intersects a generally vertical plane passing through the external flow surface and the windshield at a longitudinal centerline of the cab portion, and wherein positioning the windshield includes positioning the windshield so that a second contour of the external flow surface and the windshield intersecting a generally horizontal plane passing through the external flow surface and the windshield and extending aft over the windshield to a position on the external flow surface aft of the windshield has a generally continuously smooth, uninked shape.

31. (Original) The method of claim 27 wherein positioning a windshield includes positioning a windshield having an external surface that forms a portion of a conical surface.

32. (Original) The method of claim 27 wherein positioning the windshield includes positioning the windshield so that the contour is defined by an intersection between:

a plane oriented at one of any angle from vertical to horizontal; and  
both the external flow surface and the windshield.

33. (Original) The method of claim 27, further comprising disposing a radar within the external flow surface.

34.-35. (Cancelled)

36. (Original) The method of claim 27 wherein positioning the windshield includes positioning a single panel extending across a generally vertical plane passing through a longitudinal centerline of the external flow surface.

37. (Original) The method of claim 27 wherein positioning the windshield includes a positioning a plurality of panels extending aft from a generally vertical plane passing through a longitudinal centerline of the external flow surface.

38. (Original) The method of claim 27 wherein positioning the windshield includes positioning the windshield so that the contour is generally smooth, continuous and unkinked at a first joint between a lower edge of the windshield and the external surface, and at a second joint between an upper edge of the windshield and the external surface.

39. (Original) The method of claim 27, further comprising disposing a crew station within the external flow surface, the crew station including aircraft controls.

40. (Cancelled)